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### ***SBA Helps Open “Doors” For Local Firm***

**FAIRMONT** - Larry Zaccagnini is opening lots of doors for companies in West Virginia. No, he isn't a doorman at some exotic resort or hotel, but the owner of a small business called Capital Doors located in Fairmont.

“We install and service industrial and commercial garage doors, coiling doors, shutters, fire doors and many other specialty doors,” said Zaccagnini. “We’ve installed doors from the size of a regular entry door to hanger doors. Sizes can extend to 60 feet tall and 40 feet wide.”

Zaccagnini purchased the business, which employs 15, in 1999 from Lyle and Bradley Helmick. He has worked at Capital Doors since 1990 as a sales representative and jumped at the opportunity to buy the business from the Helmicks.

“I worked and helped my father run a construction business for about 20 years,” Zaccagnini said. “So I guess you can say entrepreneurship runs in the family.”

Chances are you’ve seen or walked through a product from Capital Doors without even knowing it. “We’ve installed doors in funeral homes, churches, convention centers, schools, federal prisons, the Stonewall Resort and the new Radisson hotel in Morgantown,” he said. “We are gearing up for an exciting project on the horizon at the Institute for Scientific Research.”

Before he could purchase the business, Zaccagnini knew he had to put together a good business plan and do some research before he approached the bank for financing. That’s where the local Small Business Development Center, SCORE Chapter and the U.S. Small Business Administration’s Business Information Center came in handy.

The SBA is a federal government agency that helps maintain and strengthen the nation’s economy by aiding, counseling, assisting and protecting the interests of small business and by helping families and businesses recover from national disasters. SCORE and SBDC’s are valuable SBA resource partners who provide counseling services and management assistance, free of charge in most instances, to current and prospective small business owners.

“I didn’t have access to a computer at the time, but knew the BIC had several I could use to do the research I needed,” he said. “The BIC was also an excellent resource, along with the counselors from SCORE, in helping me put together a great business plan.”

Once the business plan was complete and the funding secured, Zaccagnini turned to another SBA resource partner to help with the accounting aspect of running a small business.

“The previous owners were not using the latest technology help to manage the business,” he said. “I knew in order for the business to grow and for me to keep a handle on the finances, we would need to purchase some computers and get the employees trained on the software programs.”

Zaccagnini and a few of his employees took advantage of a SBDC training course on QuickBooks, which was being used by Capital Doors at the time. The training and new equipment helped put the company on the right track and resulted in a sales increase of 40 percent.

The assistance Zaccagnini received from the BIC also led to the recent hiring of a new employee. “We were having some strange problems with our PC’s which I couldn’t figure out,” Zaccagnini explains. “I contacted the BIC and asked if they knew of anyone who could look at the PC’s and provide a solution. Through his contacts, the BIC manager had someone at the office almost immediately. They discovered the problem as well as incorporated some additional controls on the computers.”

Zaccagnini was so impressed with the service provided and the knowledge displayed by this person that he offered him the position of administrative assistant, which was accepted.

When asked for the keys to operating a successful business, Zaccagnini said, “You must have good employees, take time to make sure the customer is satisfied, provide good service and sell good quality products.”

He added, “It takes a lot of hard work and long hours to operate a small business, but its well worth it.” Zaccagnini is also quick to tout the assistance he received from SCORE, SBDC and the BIC. “Just knowing they are there is very assuring,” concludes Zaccagnini. “You know you can trust them. They have the knowledge and experience to help out in just about any business situation.”

For additional information on the programs and services offered by the SBA and its resource partners, contact the West Virginia District Office at 1-800-767-8052, ext. 8 or by email at [wvinfo@sba.gov](mailto:wvinfo@sba.gov). You can also visit their web site at [www.sba.gov/wv](http://www.sba.gov/wv).

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